



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO  
STANDARD PRACTICE

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DEPARTMENT

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

SUBJECT

PHARMACY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

APPROVED

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James McReynolds, Director

**I. PURPOSE**

To familiarize DBH staff with the policies and procedures for issuing and processing DBH prescriptions.

**II. POLICY**

A. The Department of Behavioral Health will pay for prescriptions if:

1. The prescription is issued by a DBH physician or one authorized by the Deputy Director for Medical Services for the convenience of DBH.
2. The prescription is for a designated DBH patient.
3. The medication prescribed is on the "DBH Approved Drug Formulary", unless the patient is in a locked contract facility.
4. It is determined by a DBH Financial Interviewer that the patient is financially unable to pay for his/her own medication.
5. The medication prescribed is for a DBH patient confined in a locked contract facility with prior authorization from Deputy Director for Medical Services.

B. The Department of Behavioral Health will not pay for prescriptions when:

1. The patient is Medi-Cal eligible and the medication is covered by the Medi-Cal Formulary; or the patient is confined in a locked contract facility; or the physician writing the prescription has not been authorized; or the medication is not on the Medi-Cal/DBH Formulary and the Director of Medical Services did authorize use.
2. It has been determined by a financial interviewer that the patient is financially able to pay for his/her own medication, unless the patient is confined in a locked contract facility.

C. Physicians will prescribe medications covered by Medi-Cal whenever possible when medication is not covered by Medi-Cal, the Director of Medical Services must authorize its use.

- D. Before filling a prescription, the pharmacy is responsible for determining whether DBH, Medi-Cal, or the patient is subject to payment by the financial coding on the prescription.

E. PREScription QUANTITY AND REFILL AUTHORIZATION

Each prescription must only be dispensed in a one month (up to thirty-one days) supply of medications. At the time of writing the original prescription, a County physician may authorize one refill (up to thirty-one additional days) for one month's supply beyond the original prescription. At no time shall Contractor dispense to patient or charge the County for more than one month's supply of each prescription. At no time will dispensing more than a one month supply or providing more than one refill be authorized by DBH, nor will such be reimbursed by DBH.

**III. GENERAL**

A. DBH Drug Formulary

1. The Deputy Director for Medical Services is responsible for maintaining, updating, and distributing the formulary to authorized physicians/clinics, contract pharmacies, and Administrative Services staff.
2. The formulary will be revised as often as is necessary by the Deputy Director for Medical Services however no less often than once per fiscal year.

B. Authorized Physicians

1. The Department of Behavioral Health physicians (regular and contract employees) can write prescriptions on DBH prescription forms.
2. Other physicians authorized by the Deputy Director for Medical Services may not use DBH forms.

C. DBH Contract Pharmacies

The Department of Behavioral Health has contracted with a limited number of pharmacies throughout the County to fill the prescriptions of those patients for which it has been determined that DBH will reimburse. Each pharmacy contract indicates whether or not DBH will pay for delivery services. An agreement to provide pharmaceutical and consultation services at the DBH operated psychiatric health facilities is included in the contract of a select pharmacy.

1. The list of authorized contract pharmacies will be maintained and updated, at least annually, by the DBH Office of Contracts Administration.
2. The Office of Contracts Administration will distribute the list of authorized contract pharmacies to all DBH physicians, clinics, and administrative services staff.
3. DBH prescription forms will be issued to DBH authorized employee/contract physicians and clinics only.

#### **IV. PROCEDURES FOR OUTPATIENT, DAY CARE, AND INPATIENT TAKE HOME DRUGS**

##### **A. Physician/Clinic**

When an authorized physician writes a prescription for a DBH patient:

1. The physician/clinic must indicate whether the prescription is to be delivered (San Bernardino area) or whether the prescription was telephoned in to the pharmacy.
2. The physician/clinic staff (at Gilbert Street Clinics, the FI's) must indicate on the prescription form in the Financial Code block:
  - a. The patient's current financial code (found on the P.F.I. or patient's DBH identification card or on the left hand side of the charge data invoice).
  - b. The source of payment for medications (letter "P" of the patient is responsible, "D" if DBH is subject to payment, "M" if Medi-Cal is subject to payment, and "H" if patient is a member of a HMO). Source of payment will also be found on P.I.D., patients, DBH ID card, or on the left hand side of the charge data invoices.
3. If the prescription was telephoned in to the pharmacy, the physician must complete a three-part prescription or other authorized order form indicating it was a telephone order. The clinic must mail the first two parts of the prescription to the pharmacy and retain the pink copy for their records.

**B. Pharmacy**

When the pharmacy receives the first two parts of a prescription, the pharmacy will:

1. Determine whether the medication prescribed is on the DBH approved formulary.
2. Determine who is responsible for payment.
3. If the prescription is subject to reimbursement by DBH the pharmacy will:
  - a. Attach Part 2 of the prescription to the DBH pharmacy billing form.
  - b. Submit billings to the DBH Accounting Services on a monthly basis (including a 3.5" diskette with the billing information).

**V. PROCEDURES FOR DBH PSYCHIATRIC HEALTH FACILITY MEDICATIONS**

**A. Medication Orders**

1. When a medication is ordered by an authorized physician the physician will write the order in the patient's medical record and complete the DBH prescription form as indicated in the above procedures, using "7 days" instead of a quantity when the order will be telephoned but indicating a specific quantity if the prescription is to be hand-carried.
2. When the psychiatric facility nurse "takes off" the order:
  - a. The nurse will enter the medication on a medication order sheet.
  - b. The nurse will call the pharmacy and order the medication.
3. When the medications are received:
  - a. The nurse will give the pharmacy the first two parts of the prescription.
  - b. The nurse will retain the third part of the prescription.
  - c. The pharmacy shall bill DBH as indicated in the above procedures.

**B. Telephone Orders**

1. When a psychiatric facility nurse receives a medication order from the physician on a telephone basis:
  - a. The nurse will call the pharmacy and order the medication, using "7 days" or "as indicated" for the quantity.
  - b. The pharmacy will deliver the medication according to the terms of their contract.
  - c. The psychiatric facility will mail or deliver Parts 1 and 2 of the prescription within two working days to the pharmacy for billing DBH Accounting Services.